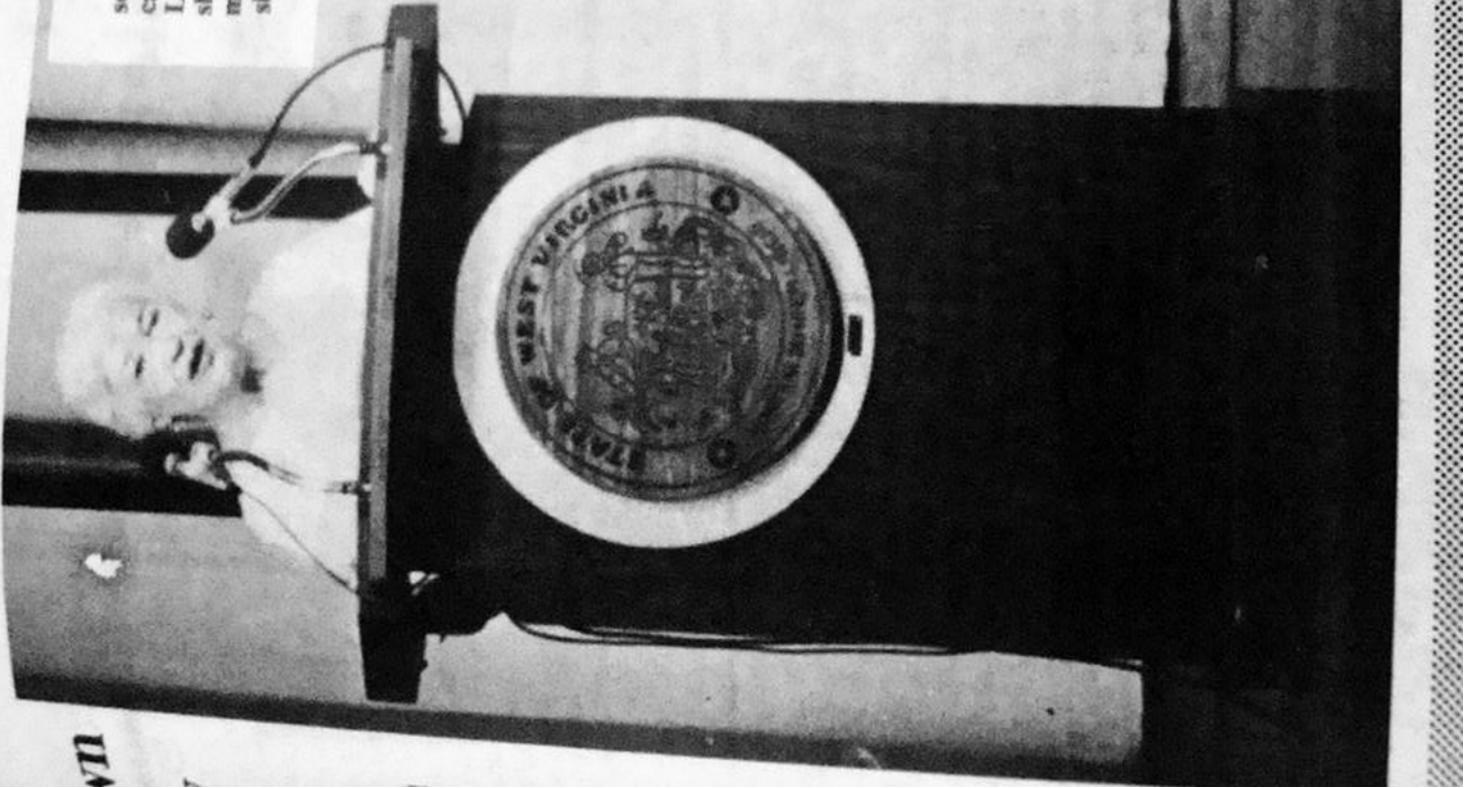


Oh, so this is it, and still we don't know what is so rib-tickling (see front page). Some photographer caught you laughing at something Poet Laureate Louise McNeill said that time in Washington when she was made Daughter of the Year and you were made Son of the Year. But you don't remember what she said? Okay, we'll have to ask Louise.



"New Voice in the Land"

Louise McNeill Due State Honor

"There's a new voice in the land," Stephen Vincent Benet, one of America's most distinguished poets, said that after reading the poetry of a West Virginia woman — Louise McNeill.

Benet is gone now, but the lady is going strong. Yet despite what Benet said about her and her poetry, West Virginia has yet to fully acknowledge her contribution to the state.

So, with the new administration, Hillbilly once again, with deep hope, appeals to the new governor to consider and appoint as poet laureate of this state the much deserving Louise McNeill.

Mrs. Roger Waterman Pease is a Pocahontas girl, born and reared on a mountain farm near Marlinton, land on which the McNeill family lived since before the Revolution.

Her father taught school in the two-room school house she attended. Eventually she received her bachelor's degree in English from Concord College,

and her master's from Miami University of Ohio. She received a doctorate in history from West Virginia University, because at the time they did not offer an English doctorate.

Louise McNeill is perhaps most famous for her 1939

Daily Athenaeum, the student newspaper of WVU. The book, "West Virginia Women," includes a sketch of her life and work.

Louise McNeill is officially retired, and living now in Lewisburg. She has taught at Concord College, Potomac State, Fairmont State College, and other elementary and

preparatory schools. Her husband is a retired instructor at W.V.U. Their son, Douglas, is a graduate of the University of Connecticut.

Louise McNeill still writes poetry, and in fact may have another project up her sleeve. Hillbilly believes it is long past due to honor her with the position of poet laureate of West Virginia. Maybe this time we can pull it off.



Art from the cover of her first book, "Gauley Mountain".



LOUISE McNEILL



...Perusing her third book.

A LITERARY PAGE

Is presented each week as Hillbilly as a means of informing school students of the writings, especially new books, of West Virginians. The firms listed here are making this weekly page possible.

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collection of poems, "Gauley Mountain." This, her first collection, was a series of historical poems tracing the lives of various West Virginia families, mostly during the pioneer days.

Her second volume, "Time Is Our House," was published in 1942. It contains philosophical poems and a section of lyrics on World War II.

Most recently effusing from her pen was the book "Paradox Hill: From Appalachia to Lunar Shore," published by the West Virginia University Library with private funds made available through the West Virginia University Foundation, Inc. In this book she looks at the heritage of the Mountain State residents as she traces their consciousness from pioneer days to atomic frontiers, and looks to the future with uncertainty.

Miss McNeill writes in traditional verse form; however she believes that the beauty of poetry lies in content and feeling rather than form. She believes poetry should be useful — useful to the spirit, useful to relieve the mind, and useful to society. She has strong convictions about herself, her heritage, her homeland and its future. Her ability to translate these convictions into the form of poetry is what makes her poetry so beautiful.

Her poems have appeared in countless publications. Her first poetry appeared in the

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FIRST FEDERAL SAVINGS
AND LOAN ASSOCIATION
OF SISTERSVILLE, WEST VIRGINIA

Virginia Map—1823

Full size reproduction of a rare English steel engraving of the states of Virginia (including present-day West Virginia) and Maryland.



LOUISE MCNEILL



...Perusing her third book.

West Virginia's Poet Laureate

Dr. Louise McNeill Pease, a Lewisburg poet whose newest book will be used in West Virginia classrooms, has been named West Virginia's new Poet Laureate.

The announcement was made by Governor Rockefeller, who also announced that Roy Lee Harman of Beckley, who has served as Poet Laureate for 41 years, will assume the title of Poet Laureate Emeritus.

The Governor said Dr. Pease, who writes under the name of Louise McNeill, will be formally installed in a ceremony this spring at the Cultural Center.

"I share a tremendous admiration for Louise McNeill's sensitive poetry. She's captured the cadence of the language and the history of our people in volumes of poetry which poignantly bespeak our heritage. I deem it fitting that she chronicle the state she loves as its Poet Laureate," the Governor said, in making the appointment.

Dr. Pease's newest book, "Elderberry Flood," is the first book to be published by the State Department of Culture and History. It tells, in poetic form, the history of West Virginia.



25th Wedding Anniversary

A surprise party was given for Mr. and Mrs. Keith Moore on their 25th Anniversary on February 10 at the Legion Hall. Attending were Mr. and Mrs. Wade Sharp, Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Curry, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Laskey, Mr. and

Joey, Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Clifton, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Wilfong and Daren, Mr. and Mrs. Johnnie Nelson, Mr. and Mrs. Roy Landis, Dewey Sharp, Mr. and Mrs. Mike McElwee, Sandy Moore, Tom Morrison, Bill Barnett, Jeff Barnett.

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ginia from the time before it was settled up to modern times. The book, through a joint effort between the Governor, the De-

partment of Culture and History and the Department of Education, will be made available to all students studying West Virginia history.

Louise McNeill Pease's published volumes of poetry includes "Mountain White," "Gauley Mountain" (which includes a foreword by Stephen Vincent Benet with jacket comments by Louis Untermeyer and Archibald MacLeish), "Time is Our House," "From a Dark Mountain," "Paradox Hill," "From Appalachia to Lunar Shore," with jacket comments by Jesse Stuart and Louis Untermeyer, and "The Great Kanawha River in the Old South."

In addition, she's had articles published in more than 19 magazines, among them American Mercury, Atlantic Monthly, Harper's Saturday Review, Saturday Evening Post (over a 20-year period), Ladies Home Journal, Commonwealth, Appalachian Review, Good Housekeeping, and the Christian Science Monitor.

Dr. Pease, a native of Pocahontas County, received her early education in rural schools to which she later returned as a teach-

Mrs. Ken Swiger, Mr. and Mrs. Ed Wagner, Mr. and Mrs. Curtis Pyles, Mr. and Mrs. Bill Clendenen and

The cake was made by Mrs. Helen Sharp. Nice gifts were received and a good time was had by all.

er. She earned degrees at Concord College (A.B.), Miami University of Ohio (M.A.), West Virginia University (Ph.D) and also studied at Ohio University.

She taught for 30 years at schools including Aiken (S.C.) Preparatory School, West Virginia University, Potomac State College, Concord College and Fairmont State College.

In 1973, Dr. Pease retired to devote time to her writing. She was honored by the West Virginia Society in Washington as the 1978 "West Virginia Daughter of the Year," at the same event at which Governor Rockefeller was named "Son of the Year."

Her other honors include an Atlantic Monthly poetry prize, and having a prize for poetry established in her name at Morris Harvey College.

Dr. Pease is married to Roger W. Pease, formerly of Ashfield, Massachusetts. They have one son, Douglas, who resides in Storrs, Connecticut.

D & E College
Max Morath

Max Morath, an accomplished actor and monologist as well as a versatile pianist, will be combining his affection for the



Birthday

Mrs. Mamie Geiger Kellison observed her 89th birthday at her home in Lively, Virginia, February 7, 1979. Mr. and Mrs. Kellison and son, Wayne, are former residents of Marlinton. Mr. and Mrs. Kellison were married in 1920.

Mrs. Kellison and her sister, Eva Gwin, are the only living grandchildren of German emigrants to this country.

Their grandfather built the grist mill on Stony Creek that was later called the Waugh Mill and now has been rebuilt at Babcock State Park.

Mrs. Betty Bennett, of Lively, and Virginia and

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His work as a plant breeder and as the chief architect of his company's plant breeding programs, has responded to the critical needs of agricultural and food production in the U. S. and abroad.

Dr. Brown has been active in the conservation and utilization of plant genetic resources through his activities as a member of the National Academy of Sciences committees on preservation and indigenous strains of maize as well as vulnerability of major food crops.

He has served on the President's Science Advisory Committee on World Food Supply and the National Germplasm Committee, and has been an advisor to the Joint United States Department of Agriculture - State Agricultural Experiment Station task force on corn and grain sorghum.

He has lectured throughout the world on the subject of maize breeding, maize genetics and cytogenetics and the evaluation of maize and germplasm conservation and utilization.

His scientific contributions are illuminated by his strong concerns for peace and social justice, and he has worked at promoting tighter links between scientists in academia and those in commercial settings.

Dr. Brown received his undergraduate degree from Bridgewater College and his master's and Ph.D. from Washington University. He will be awarded the Doctor of Science degree at WVU's commencement.

Residents of Johnston, Iowa, Dr. Brown and his wife, Alice

came to WVU in the mid-1940's with her husband, Roger Pease, a faculty member in the School of Agriculture. She took a job with the WVU Extension Service, working with public school teachers who were renewing their certificates, before returning to graduate school.

After she received her doctorate, she taught at Potomac State College and at Fairmont State College, where she was a full professor until she retired in 1972.

She received the Bread Loaf Publications Award for her work, "Time is Our House," and the West Virginia Library Association Award for "Paradox Hill."

Other awards and honors include selection as West Virginia's Daughter of the Year, the Charleston Gazette's West Virginian of the Year, the University of Charleston's Gold Medallion of Appalachia Award winner and, most recently, she was inducted into the WVU Alumni Association's Academy of Distinguished Alumni.

Ms. McNeill will receive a Doctor of Humane Letters degree during commencement ceremonies.

The couple has one son, Douglas, a researcher at the University of Connecticut.

She is the daughter of the late Dr. and Mrs. G. D. McNeill and a sister of James McNeill, of Buckeye, and Mrs. C. P. Dorsey, of Morgantown.

Glen Hiner, a native of Morgantown and chief executive of GE Plastics Business Group, headquartered in Massachusetts, is the other degree recipient.

County Natives to Receive Honorary Commencement Degrees

Two Pocahontas County natives are among the four people who have distinguished themselves individually in the fields of state government, the fight against world hunger, American poetry and international manufacturing and will receive honorary degrees during May 14 commencement ceremonies at West Virginia University.

Gaston Caperton, West Virginia's 31st governor; William Lacy Brown, president emeritus of Pioneer Hi-Bred Seed Company; Louise McNeill, West Virginia Poet Laureate; and Glen H. Hiner, senior vice president of General Electric Company, will receive their honorary degrees from WVU. President Neil S. Bucklew. Ms. McNeill and Mr. Brown are from Pocahontas County.

"The contributions of all these individuals to the state and nation have been extraordinary," Dr. Bucklew said. "These outstanding individuals have been blessed with the gifts of vision and perseverance, and have worked hard to be successful in their chosen endeavors."

Governor Caperton will be awarded the Doctor of Laws degree.

William Lacy Brown, a native of Arbovale, has been associated with Hi-Bred International, Inc., since 1945, advancing from researcher to chief geneticist to director of research to chairman and now president emeritus.

Hannah Brown, have two children, William T. Brown and Alicia Brown-Matthes. His sister, Louise Brown Butcher, lives in Arbovale. Their parents were the late Mr. and Mrs. Tilden Brown.

Pocahontas County native Louise McNeill has been teaching and writing poetry about her native Appalachia since 1930.

West Virginia's Poet Laureate (designated so by former Gov. John D. Rockefeller in 1979) was born in Buckeye, and began her teaching career in a one-room school at the age of 19.

Ms. McNeill is the author of several collections of poems, the most recent titled "Elderberry Flood," as well as numerous scholarly works and contributions to anthologies and textbooks. Her new memoir, "The Milkweed Ladies," once again focuses on life in the mountains.

She began her most famous publication, "Gauley Mountain (1939)," when she was working on her master's degree in creative writing at Miami of Ohio University in 1938, and completed it by oil lamp and wood stove in a farmhouse in Buckeye.

The American poet received her undergraduate degree from Concord College and her doctorate in history from WVU in the late 1950's. In between Ms. McNeill attended the Bread Loaf School of English in Vermont—where she worked with Robert Frost—and the University of Iowa Writers Workshop.

She came to WVU in the

ting Class of the Edray District High School was delivered by Rev. H. H. Orr, pastor of the Richwood Presbyterian Church, on Sunday night at the Methodist Church.

Mr. Orr used the life of Saul, the first king of Israel, as illustrative of a good beginning and a miserable ending. It was a fine, practical discourse well timed and timely. A large congregation was in attendance. The young ladies and young gentlemen presented a very fine appearance in their college caps and gowns. There are thirty-two in this year's class, twenty five girls and seven boys, the largest of any graduating class of this school up to this time. The class roll is: Robert Barlow, Jennie Barnes, Alvergia Darnell, Anna Denison, Bedford Dilley, Mary Warwick Dunlap, Joe Eskridge, Nela Flack, Helen Fortune, Eula Geiger, Glenna Gibson, Goldie Gay Hannah, Marjorie Hannah, Edith Kelmenson, Edith May, Evelyn Ginger, Stanley McLaughlin, Curtis McCoy, Louise McNeill, Gaynelle Moore, Marguerite Moore, Vetale Moore, Anne Morris, Virginia Neel, Reta Rexrode, Mary Buckman, Marguerite Robertson, Consula Rider, Sterl Shrader, Helen Smith, Eula Walton, Jesse Wiley.

Arnott Yeager, who taught in the Alderson High school, came home Saturday.

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historic times and ends looking into the future. It covers incidents and people from all over the State and all aspects of the society that makes up West Virginia. Yes, blacks and women are well represented here.

Pocahontas County readers will particularly savor poems about this area which Dr. McNeill knows so well: The Moccasin String, which tells of an incident in an Indian raid at Mill Point in the 1780's; A Fable of Droop Mountain, which tells a little-known legend about the Civil War battle in 1863; Corner Tree, based on the Lewis Oak, the stump of which stood in Marlinton until this year; Lumber Ghost Towns and Green Bank Radio Astronomy Center.

This is a book of heroes, heroines, and larger-than-life characters in West Virginia's rich story: Cornstalk, John Lewis, the slave Dick Pointer, Betty Zane, Daniel Boone, John Brown, Nancy Hart, to name just a few. This is also a book of courageous but forgotten individuals: the settlers, the itinerant teachers, the circuit riders, the railroad builders, the loggers. It took all of these to make West Virginia and in telling their story Louise McNeill is not ashamed to allow her pride in her native state to show through. Recommended for all West Virginians and all others who want to catch the spirit of the Mountain State.

Dear Editor,

I have been an admirer of Louise McNeill for many years. I was introduced to her once, when I was a student at WVU in the '50s.

Last Friday evening Howard and I went over to Mount Hope to watch the dramatization of her book, Gauley Mountain. The players made the poems come to life for us.

I thought perhaps if people in Pocahontas County knew more about the performance some would want to come to Mount Hope to see it. Or perhaps some organization could persuade the group to come to Pocahontas County some time, perhaps in connection with Pioneer Days. It's well worth seeing.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Howard Brown

NOTE: Gauley Mountain is being performed every Friday and Saturday evening at 8 p.m. through August 14. The production is at the Princess Playhouse in Mt. Hope and tickets are \$4. Call 877-5194 for more information.

One of the best plays ever given by the High School students was "Peg of my Heart," by the members of "The Seneca" the High School annual. This play was given at the Seneca Theatre Friday night to a capacity house. Those taking a part were Reta Rexrode, Stanley McLaughlin, Mary Warwick Dunlap, Anne Morris, Louise McNeill, Joe Eskridge, Addison McNeill, Bedford Dilley, Edward Rexrode. The proceeds will be used to help defray the expense of this year's issue of "The Seneca".

One of the most enjoyable amateur theatrical events ever put over in this town was the play "Thank You", given by the Jesters Dramatic Club of the Edray District High School, last Thursday and Friday nights. The crowds were large and a good sum was realized. This money will be used for school purposes. The characters of the play were Gaynell Moore, Mary Hiner, Edith Kelmenson, Anna Denison, Louise McNeill, Stanley McLaughlin, E. Clyde Buzzard, Bedford Dilley, Gus Edgar, Curtis McCoy, Paul Sharp, E. S. Clutter, Edward Rexrode, Clay Tallman, Reed McNeill and Joe Eskridge.

Honored

Louise McNeill Pease, West Virginia's Poet Laureate, has received still another accolade. Her words—a poem—have been preserved on a dedicatory plaque in the John E. Hull Memorial Room at Miami (Ohio) University from which she received her master's degree in 1938.

The poem, "Dedication," a 16 line poem from Paradox Hill, will be engraved on a bronze plaque which will include the names of Miami men who have died in American Wars.

Calling Dr. Pease an "outstanding Miamian," the school's alumni newspaper reports that the West Virginia poet was the first master's degree candidate ever to turn in a creative writing project accepted as a thesis.

The Poet Laureate, named to the post in 1977, was honored as West Virginia Daughter of the Year in ceremonies with Governor Rockefeller in 1979 in Washington, D. C.

Her writings include Elderberry Flood, a volume of poetry telling West Virginia's history, published by the Department of Culture and History; Gauley Mountain, and Paradox Hill, among many others. She is a native of Buckeye and presently resides in Lewisburg.

UNANSWERED

(By Louise McNeill)

I am a hill-child playing
With a moss grown rock for my home
Kneading mud pies for my children
Out of the damp wood loam,
And I pause from my baking a moment
Holding the earth in my hand,
Gazing with childish wonder,
Seeking to understand.

I am a hill-girl bending
Over a long corn row—
With the sun's weight on my shoulders
With the aching weight of my hoe,
Then—suddenly, I am kneeling
Under the brazen sky—
dingling red dust and beauty,
And an ageless cry.

I am a woman—waiting—
On a hill in the springing grass—
Stretching my arms to the sunlight,
Hearing a strange wind pass—
Pregnant life in my body,
Stirring life, and I clutch
Dark soil at the roots of the grasses,
Pregnant and warm to my touch.

I am a lovely lady—
Sheathed in a silken gown,
Strolling the garden path at dusk,
Hearing the leaves drift down,
And I kneel by a pool in the garden
Finding my lost tear's start—
Pressing a handful of petalled mold
Hard—hard—through the silk to my heart.

I am a stranger sleeping
Under a tree on a hill,
One with the earth forever,
But questing still;
For I have probed the earth to find
Its meaning,
My plea—unheard,
Has pierced the final wall of growing
silence
And found no word.

(Editor's Note: This poem won the
first prize offered by the State Fed-
eration of Woman's Clubs of West
Virginia.)

William Claiborne McNeill

William C. McNeill died at his home on Swago, January 30, 1935, at the advanced age of eighty-seven years one month. With his passing the Swago community and the county lost a most useful and substantial citizen. He was one of a family of nine children born to Jonathan G. and Angeline B. McNeill. Of the nine, four survive. These are Betty Buckley and Enoch McNeill of Buckeye; Asa, who lives at Sutton, and Ulysses of Santa Ana, California. Millie, wife of the late Aaron Kee, and the eldest of the family, and three brothers—Daniel, James and Dock died several years ago.

William C. McNeill married Susan Buckley, daughter of the Reverend Joshua Buckley, on April 21, 1870, and for the most part of their sixty-five years of married life they resided on the old homestead near the mouth of Dry Creek. His aged widow and five children survive him. The children are Mrs. Neva J. Kee and Mrs. A. S. Overholt of Marlinton; Mrs. G. D. McNeill and Mrs. Mortimer Kellison of Buckeye, and Reuben S. of Marlinton.

Early in life, Mr. McNeill joined the M. P. Church and he lived a most exemplary christian life, being ever willing and anxious to do anything possible for the advancement of the church or his community.

In early manhood he was noted for his great physical strength, but in middle age he was stricken by a severe case of 'flu' from which he never entirely recovered. For many years he has been confined to his home because of poor health.

From the Legislature

By Delegate Jane Price Sharp

Here is the poem Louise
McNeill Pesse read to the
Legislature from her book,
"Elderberry Flood."

Daniel Boone

(Daniel Boone, when past the
prime of his life, lived in the Grest
Kanawha Valley for some 10 years.
In the 1790's, he was elected to
represent Kanawha County in the
Virginia Assembly.)

It was certainly not in his early
plans,
And certainly not in his nature;
But Old Dan Boone — and his
record stands —
Sat in the Legislature.

He dressed himself in his deerskin
clothes,
And he walked to Richmond City;
Enrolled himself "where the hot air
blows,"
And was then put on committee.

He sat two days. Then took up his
gun,
Walked back to Kanawha River.
He had fought Shawnee, had
fought Cherokee;
But *them* *lawyers* made him
quiver.

McNeill book published

The University of Pittsburgh Press proudly announces the publication of *Fermi Buffalo*, a collection of poetry written by the late Louise McNeill, West Virginia's Poet Laureate from 1979 until her death in June 1993.

Louise McNeill achieved national prominence as a poet, essayist and historian. She was born in 1911, at Buckeye, on an Appalachian hill farm that had been in her family for nine generations. McNeill was educated at Concord College, Miami of Ohio, and West Virginia University.

HONORED

The Board of Governors of the International Platform Association announces the election to IPA membership of Louise McNeill Pease.

The International Platform Association membership is composed of distinguished and dedicated persons from fifty-five nations. Its ancestor, the American Lyceum Association out of which the IPA evolved, was founded one hundred fifty years ago by Daniel Webster.

DEATH

Louise McNeill Pease

Louise McNeill Pease, 82, died Wednesday, June 16, 1993, at Good Living, a retirement community in Malden, where she had made her home for several years.

The daughter of the late G. D. and Grace (McNeill) McNeill, she was born at Buckeye January 9, 1911.

In 1939 she married Roger W. Pease, who died September 24, 1990.

Her husband, her parents, a sister, Elizabeth Dorsey, and a brother, Ward McNeill, preceded her in death.

Surviving her are a son, Douglas McNeill Pease, of South Windsor, Connecticut; a granddaughter, Noralyn M. Pease; and a brother, James W. McNeill, of Buckeye.

Services were held Sunday on the lawn of Cabin Creek Quilts in Malden and then on Monday at 11 a. m. in VanReenen Funeral Home by the Rev. Roy Gwinn. Burial was on the McNeill Farm at Buckeye.

Mrs. Pease was Poet Laureate of West Virginia, named in 1977 by then-Governor Jay Rockefeller. She started writing poetry when she was 16 and had poems published in many national magazines. She was the author of several books, *Mountain White* (1931), *Gauley Mountain, Time is Our House*, *Paradox Hill, Elderberry Flood*, *The Milkweed Ladies* (her memoirs), *Hill Daughter: New and Selected Poems* (1991), and many magazine articles.

Just before her death she completed her last book. Her son came to see her, typed the last chapter, put it in the mail to the publishers, and then she seemed to let go of life, according to the family.

She graduated from Concord College and earned a master's degree at Miami University in Ohio, and a doctorate from West Virginia University.

She taught English and history for more than 30 years, from rural schools in Pocahontas County to Potomac State, Concord, Fairmont State, and Davis and Elkins colleges. In 1937 she was named Teacher of the Year at Concord College and was selected Daughter of the Year by the West Virginia Society of Washington, D. C., in 1977. She was Parade Marshal for Pocahontas County Pioneer Days in 1979.

(Page 2)

POCAHONTAS TIMES

Entered at the Postoffice at Marlinton
West Virginia, as second class matter

SUBSCRIPTION CHARGES

In Pocahontas County, \$2.00 a year
Elsewhere, \$2.50 a year. In advance.

JANE PRICE SHARP, EDITOR

THURSDAY, FEB. 23, 1961

Poet Laureate

The townspeople of Keyser, where Dr. Louise McNeill Pease is a professor at Potomac State College, last week purchased space in the Hillbilly to support their proposal for the naming of Louise McNeill as the Poet Laureate of West Virginia. And we, of her native Pocahontas, gladly add our voices for a vote of acclamation. Dr. Pease, writing under her maiden name of Louise McNeill (she is the daughter of Dr. and Mrs. G. D. McNeill of Buckeye), is the author of the book of poems, "Gauley Mountain," and many others that have been published in nationally-known magazines. She knows the history of her people and is a fitting candidate for the honored title.

OTAT

Mountain Heritage Weekend

Mountain Heritage Weekend was designed to introduce Appalachian youth and adults to their cultural heritage and to develop an appreciation of it. This conference presented the music, instruments, language and literature of our ancestry. Various dying crafts and arts were presented such as spinning, weaving, woodcraft, pottery, candles, needlework, cornhuskery. They are trying to keep these crafts alive. The students who had the opportunity to go were amazed that our heritage is so rich and feel that it was a marvelous experience which every West Virginia mountaineer should have!

Pocahontas County was well represented at this conference by seven teenagers and two adults. Attending from the Green Bank area were Deborah Mathews, Frances Nottingham, Ruth Evelyn Varner; Marlinton was represented by Douglas Morrison and Linda Bennett. Students from Hillsboro were Linda Hill and Lynn Beard. Miss Betty Mann and William McNeel acted as counselors and both sang the praises of the camp.

Sharing this experience with the campers were Dr. Patrick Gainer, of West Virginia University; Louise McNeill Pease, of Fairmont; and Jim Comstock, Editor of the Hillbilly, and the Helvetia Dancers.

day, Morris Harvey College has published a collection of poems under the above title and among the 43 poets there are two daughters and a son of Pocahontas, Louise McNeill Pease, Pearl Buck, and O. Ralph Michael have poems in this book. The first named has a poem named "Hill-Daughter". Miss Buck's poem is an untitled selection reprinted from her bibliography by Theodore Harris and Mr. Michael's poem is "It Was Enough". Mrs. Pease, the daughter of the late G. D. McNeill, of Buckeye, is famous as a poet, and Miss Buck is famous as a novelist, but Mr. Michael's talent is not so well known. A librarian at Tygart Valley High School, he is the son of Mrs. R. L. (Nellie) Shrader and the late Omer Michael, of Marlinton. The Pocahontas Historical Museum Shop has the book on sale for \$2.50. They are at the Times Office until the Museum opens.

The big vault door from the old Bank of Marlinton building was finally loaded Monday evening for its trip to Cleveland, Ohio. It took about a week to get it out. The door, estimated to weigh about ten tons, will go to the Guardian Proof Company, subsidiary of Diebold Company, where it will get a refurbishing job. It has already been sold. The colonial styling is in great demand.

Snow continues in spite of the calendar. Alfred McNeal and Lloyd Payne got stuck in a big snowdrift on Cranberry Mountain Sunday. Lots of ramp hunters out.

Mr. and Mrs. Tony Mazziotti and son, of Atlanta, Georgia, and Bobby Lee May, daughter and son, from Pennsylvania, were home visiting their mother, Mrs. Jane May, of Durbin, last week.

Mr. and Mrs. Loren Clutter and children, Gregg, Tommie and Debbie, of Frederick, Maryland, spent the Easter holidays with their parents. Mr. and Mrs. Vinton Clutter, of Hillsboro, and the Delritos, of Richwood.

Mr. and Mrs. Jim Williams, of White Hall, Maryland, visited his mother, Mrs. Pearl Williams, of Hillsboro, and Mrs. Williams' sister, Mrs.

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Louise McNeill Pease
1911 - 1993
Poet Laureate of West Virginia
Daughter of Pocahontas

Arrow Grasses by Greenbrier River
Arrow grasses by the river,
Phalanx, spear by spear arrayed,
Teach us that we may remember
Others here have walked afraid.

Teach us—all our generation—
We are not the first to know
Death and war and red transgression
Where these quiet waters flow.

Long ago our father's father
Here in springtime dropped his corn,
Died and fell, an arrow winging
In his heart that April morn—

Dead as you and I will ever
Lie beneath the atom's burst—
Arrow grasses by the river,
Teach us we are not the first,

Not the last to live in danger,
Live in wonder and in woe,
Here on earth beside the river,
Where the quiet waters flow.

Fox and Geese

Let us make a circle here—
Round and round we go
Till our feet have made this ring
Beaten in the snow.

Let us cross it now with paths—
Crisscross passing by,
Back and forth, until our trails
Cut it like a pie.

Let us play at Fox and Geese,
Run and chase and sing,
Play the world is still at peace,
And our world a ring
Made by children in the snow of this
meadow long ago.
Children of the sun and snow—
Children of the sun.

The Dream

I tried to move,
But I could make no motion;
I tried to scream,
But all my screams were gone;
I tried to see,
But fog was lapped around me—
I lay upon my face, yet saw my spine,
And every bone there seemed to shine—
My country's bones?
Or were they mine?

Each vertebra a coin of gold
Set deeply in my flesh and skin—
Set deeply there and hammered in
Until because of gold—its love—
I could not move—
I tried to move—

Memoria

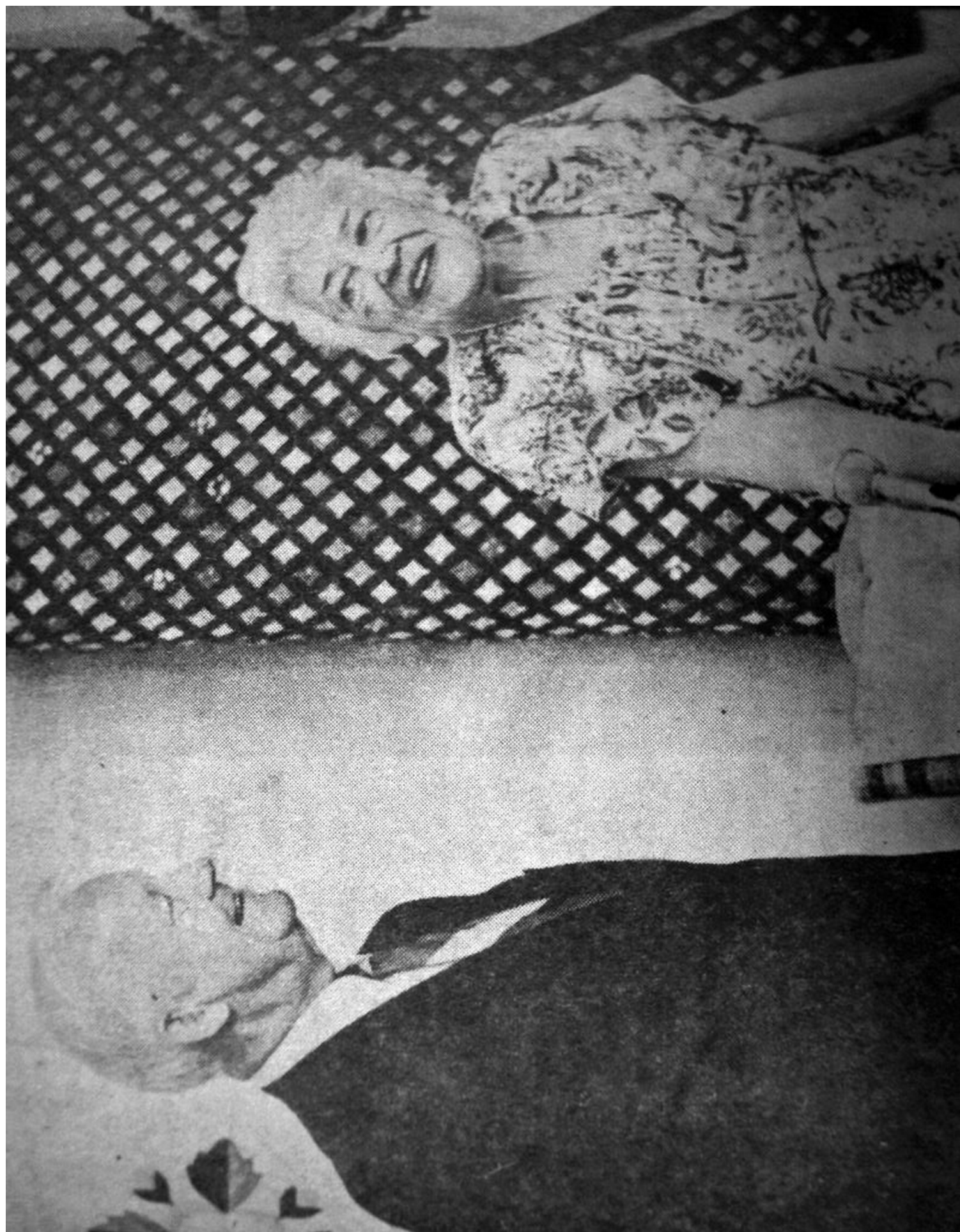
I have never heard them;
I shall never hear—
Still an echo falling
When the night is clear,
In the darkness wakes me
Like a trumpet's call:
Wild swans crying
Southward in the fall.

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Governor Arch A. Moore, Jr., is shown with West Virginia's Poet Laureate, Louise McNeill Pease, at the Cultural Center in Charleston on August 16 at a ceremony at which Mrs. Pease donated her books and manuscripts to the State Department of Culture and History. Gov. Moore accepted the gift on behalf of the State.

DEATH 6-24-93

Louise McNeill Pease

Louise McNeill Pease, 82, died Wednesday, June 16, 1993, at Good Living, a retirement community in Malden, where she had made her home for several years.

The daughter of the late G. D. and Grace (McNeill) McNeill, she was born at Buckeye January 9, 1911.

In 1939 she married Roger W. Pease, who died September 24, 1990.

Her husband, her parents, a sister, Elizabeth Dorsey, and a brother, Ward McNeill, preceded her in death.

Surviving her are a son, Douglas McNeill Pease, of South Windsor, Connecticut; a granddaughter, Noralyn M. Pease; and a brother, James W. McNeill, of Buckeye.

Services were held Sunday on the lawn of Cabin Creek Quilts in Malden and then on Monday at 11 a. m. in VanReenen Funeral Home by the Rev. Roy Gwinn. Burial was on the McNeill Farm at Buckeye.

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Services were held Sunday on the lawn of Cabin Creek Quilts in Malden and then on Monday at 11 a. m. in VanReenen Funeral Home by the Rev. Roy Gwinn. Burial was on the McNeill Farm at Buckeye.

Mrs. Pease was Poet Laureate of West Virginia, named in 1977 by then-Governor Jay Rockefeller. She started writing poetry when she was 16 and had poems published in many national magazines. She was the author of several books, *Mountain White* (1931), *Gauley Mountain*, *Time is Our House*, *Paradox Hill*, *Elderberry Flood*, *The Milkweed Ladies* (her memoirs), *Hill Daughter: New and Selected Poems* (1991), and many magazine articles.

Just before her death she completed her last book. Her son came to see her, typed the last

the author of several books, *Mountain White* (1931), *Gauley Mountain, Time is Our House*, *Paradox Hill*, *Elderberry Flood*, *The Milkweed Ladies* (her memoirs), *Hill Daughter: New and Selected Poems* (1991), and many magazine articles.

Just before her death she completed her last book. Her son came to see her, typed the last chapter, put it in the mail to the publishers, and then she seemed to let go of life, according to the family.

She graduated from Concord College and earned a master's degree at Miami University in Ohio, and a doctorate from West Virginia University.

She taught English and history for more than 30 years, from rural schools in Pocahontas County to Potomac State, Concord, Fairmont State, and Davis and Elkins colleges. In 1937 she was named Teacher of the Year at Concord College and was selected Daughter of the Year by the West Virginia Society of Washington, D. C., in 1977. She was Parade Marshal for Pocahontas County Pioneer Days in 1979.

5-30-91

McNeill's poems featured on public radio

West Virginia Public Radio will air a special program titled "Gauley Mountain" Thursday, June 20, at 8 p.m. This West Virginia Day broadcast will feature the poems from West Virginia Poet Laureate Louise McNeill's book of the same name. Noted West Virginia musician David Morris of Ivydale and award-winning West Virginia poet Irene McKinney of Belington will read the poems, providing narration and character voices.

Gauley Mountain, published in 1939 by Harcourt Brace, is a history (1760-1930) of one of the most scenic and rugged parts of West Virginia told through poems about people, places and events.

Special historic characters, such as Mad Anne Bailey and Claude Crozet, are included, but most poems are fictional, following the lives of settlers sometimes through several generations.

Larry Groce, producer of this special, said, "West Virginia Public Radio's production of "Gauley Mountain" will attempt to do for Louise McNeill's book what she did for the history of her beloved Gauley country."

West Virginia Public Radio can be heard on 88.5 FM in Charleston, 91.7 in Beckley, 90.9 in Morgantown, 89.9 in Huntington and Wheeling, 88.9 in Martinsburg and Buckhannon/Weston.

Roger W. Pease

Roger W. Pease, age 92, died in Manchester, Connecticut, on September 24, 1990. Since 1985 he has been cared for in the home of his son, Douglas, and, after a long illness, he died in the Bidwell Health Care Center.

Mr. Pease is survived by his wife, the former Louise McNeill of Buckeye; his son, Dr. Douglas McNeill Pease; a granddaughter, Noralyn M. Pease; and his nephew, Theodore M. Pease, of Anchorage, Alaska. He is also survived by two sons, Dr. Roger W. and Charles Fessendeu Pease, by a former marriage.

He was born in Ashfield, Massachusetts, August 2, 1898, the son of the Reverend C. B. F. Pease and Jessica Cole Pease. Through his mother's family he was a descendant of James Cole of Plymouth Colony and of Roger Williams.

He was a graduate of Loomis Preparatory School and attended Yale University, Class of 1920, until the outbreak of World War I. He volunteered for service in April 1917 and, at the close of the War, attended Cornell University where he graduated in Agriculture in 1922. In a much later period he attended Bread Loaf School of English, the University of Iowa, and in 1950 received an M. S. degree in Agriculture at West Virginia University.

Always a wilderness explorer, he made a long journey in the early 1920's, following the Laps and their reindeer herds across Lapland and, before his return to the United States, he climbed to the cold dark edges of North Cape.

At home, he was a teacher, farmer, carpenter and fisherman. He taught at the Boys' Latin School in Baltimore, in Kingswood Boys' School, Hartford. For ten years he was headmaster of Mooreland Hill Day School in New Britain. During the years of World War II, he was Assistant Headmaster of Aiken Preparatory School Aiken, South Carolina. After the War, he taught briefly at Davis and Elkins College and moved in 1946 to the College of Agriculture at West Virginia University, where he

worked until his retirement. His last years in West Virginia were spent in Lewisburg. In 1985, when he could no longer work in his garden and shop, he and Mrs. Pease moved to Connecticut where they were cared for in the home of their son, Douglas, and his daughter, Noralyn. In these years, Roger suffered little severe pain, and his last illness came suddenly and was not of long duration—pneumonia, "The old man's friend."

In early November a memorial service will be held in the little woodland behind the Unitarian Church in Manchester Township.

In the last year of his life, he would often quote from the 23rd Psalm, "Horatio at the Bridge," Virgil's "Aeneid," and from the beautiful "Requiem" by Robert Louis Stevenson, written just 11 years before Rog was born:

*"Under the bright and starry sky
Dig the grave and let me lie.
Glad did I live and gladly die,
And I laid me down with a will.
"This be the verse you grave for me:
Here he lies where he longed to be—
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
And the hunter home from the hill."*

—Louise McNeill Pease

EMRY KANE

By Louise McNeill

His pause was to consider
The lilies—how they spun.
He whittled on a ramrod
Till all the chores were done.
He played his hand-carved fiddle
And beat his scrawny wife,
But he never raised a poleax,
Nor picked a crow with life.

Let it be said that Emry
Was not a man to fear
The warnings of starvation,
The ill effects of beer,
The scorn of zealous neighbors,
Nor winds that caved his wall.
Let it be said for Emry
He had no fear at all.

Save one . . . that left him sickly,
Eternally beset,
Unmanned, inert. For Emry lived
In terror of his sweat.

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—
Dear Mr Price:

We are glad to authorize you to re print in The Pocahontas Times Louise McNeill's poem, "Emry Kane" from the May 13th issue of the Saturday Evening Post. The credit e require is as follows: Reprinted by special permission of The Saturday Evening Post, copyright 1939, by The Curtis Publishing Company.

Very truly yours,
The EDITOR.

Philadelphia, Penn.
June 6, 1939.

Louise McNeill

In becoming one of Appalachia's most respected poets, Louise McNeill sang with pride about the mountain heritage of the region's residents.

Now she traces their consciousness from pioneer days to atomic frontiers and looks to the future with uncertainty in her new book of poems, "Paradox Hill: From Appalachia to Lunar Shore."

Her book was published recently by McClain Printing Company of Parsons for the West Virginia University Library with private funds made available through the WVU Foundation, Inc. Copies may be ordered for \$4.50 each, plus 50 cents for postage and handling, from the Book Store, Mountainlair, West Virginia University, Morgantown, W. Va. 26506.

But who is Louise McNeill that anyone should listen to her prophecies or share her pride and fear?

She's a wife and mother, and history teacher at Fairmont State College. But more than that she's a person with strong convictions about herself, her heritage, her homeland and its future. And she's able to translate these convictions into compelling poetic rhythms.

Her name is well-known to the editors and publishers of respected national literary magazines such as Saturday Review and Atlantic Monthly, which have published her poems.

During the 1950s, she was a frequent contributor to The Saturday Evening

poetry can deal validly with social criticism. I'm not a protestant, but I'm not ashamed to try something along this line. I see no reason for poets to be so fine fingered."

Academicians, and sometimes poets themselves, often attempt to set down rules for poetic subject matter. Miss McNeill objects. She says she never places limits on what poetry should or can deal with.

"I once heard Allen Tate say that no one should write a poem about his mother. So I have deliberately written one about mine," she said.

"Paradox Hill" is divided into three sections—"Appalachia," "Scattered Leaves" and "Lunar Shores." Each deals with aspects of Appalachian life...from the traditional to the futuristic.

The book is full of the kind of poetry that Stephen Vincent Benet, in his foreword to an earlier collection of her poems, "Gauley Mountain, also published by McClain Printing Co., described as simple, direct and forceful. Many of the poems are laced with humor, some are tinged with sorrow, others are filled with outright rage.

Many of the stories spun in Miss McNeill's ballads were told to her by her father, Douglas McNeill, who was a writer, teacher and one-time sailor. He too wrote about West Virginia in a volume of short stories called "The Last

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During the 1950s, she was a frequent contributor to The Saturday Evening Post, Ladies Home Journal, Good Housekeeping, Harpers and other magazines.

Miss McNeill was born and reared on a mountain farm in Pocahontas County, where her family has lived since pre-revolutionary days. She attended the two-room schoolhouse where her father taught. And she received her bachelor's degree in English from Concord College, her master's degree from Miami University of Ohio; and a doctorate in history from West Virginia University. Why a doctorate in history?

"It was for a very practical reason," she recalled. "When I wanted to get my doctorate, WVU didn't offer one in English."

Practicality is one of her first considerations, whether applied to finishing her education or writing poetry. Miss McNeill never has ensconced herself in an ivory tower. She feels that a poet can work as practically as a bricklayer or someone who bakes a loaf of bread. This philosophy shows in her work.

"I believe poetry should be useful," Miss McNeill said. "It can be useful to the spirit, useful to relieve the mind and useful to society. Of course, it's useful to the poet."

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Sometimes she is inspired by conversations she hears in public places. Two of the most poignant poems in "Paradox Hill" are entitled "Overheard on a Bus."

At the age of 18, Miss McNeill began to write seriously, and two years later her first poems were published in a Dallas, Tex., magazine, Kaliedograph. Since then, she has published three volumes of poems and several short stories.

"I often will write a poem in a few hours," she observed. "The poems that turn out right are the ones that are written rapidly. Sometimes if I fail to get it down the first time, I can go back to it later but that doesn't happen very often."

She is a great believer in form. When she decided to write seriously, she studied form, pattern and rhythm. She rarely writes in free verse form.

Miss McNeill works very hard at finding the right words and perfecting the images in her poems. She throws away two of every three poems that she writes.

Dr. Ruel E. Foster, chairman of the WVU Department of English, thinks one

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"I believe poetry should be useful," Miss McNeill said. "It can be useful to the spirit, useful to relieve the mind and useful to society. Of course, it's useful to the poet, too, but it should go beyond that."

Miss McNeill says serious poetry has become confessionalist and that ballads, such as Bob Dylan's protest songs, are replacing poetry in one area. Some of her poems, like Dylan's deal with the public's fears and social issues.

"I feel—and this makes me quite quaint among most poets today—that

McNeill's ballads were told to her by her father, Douglas McNeill, who was a writer, teacher and one-time sailor. He too wrote about West Virginia in a volume of short stories called "The Last Forest."

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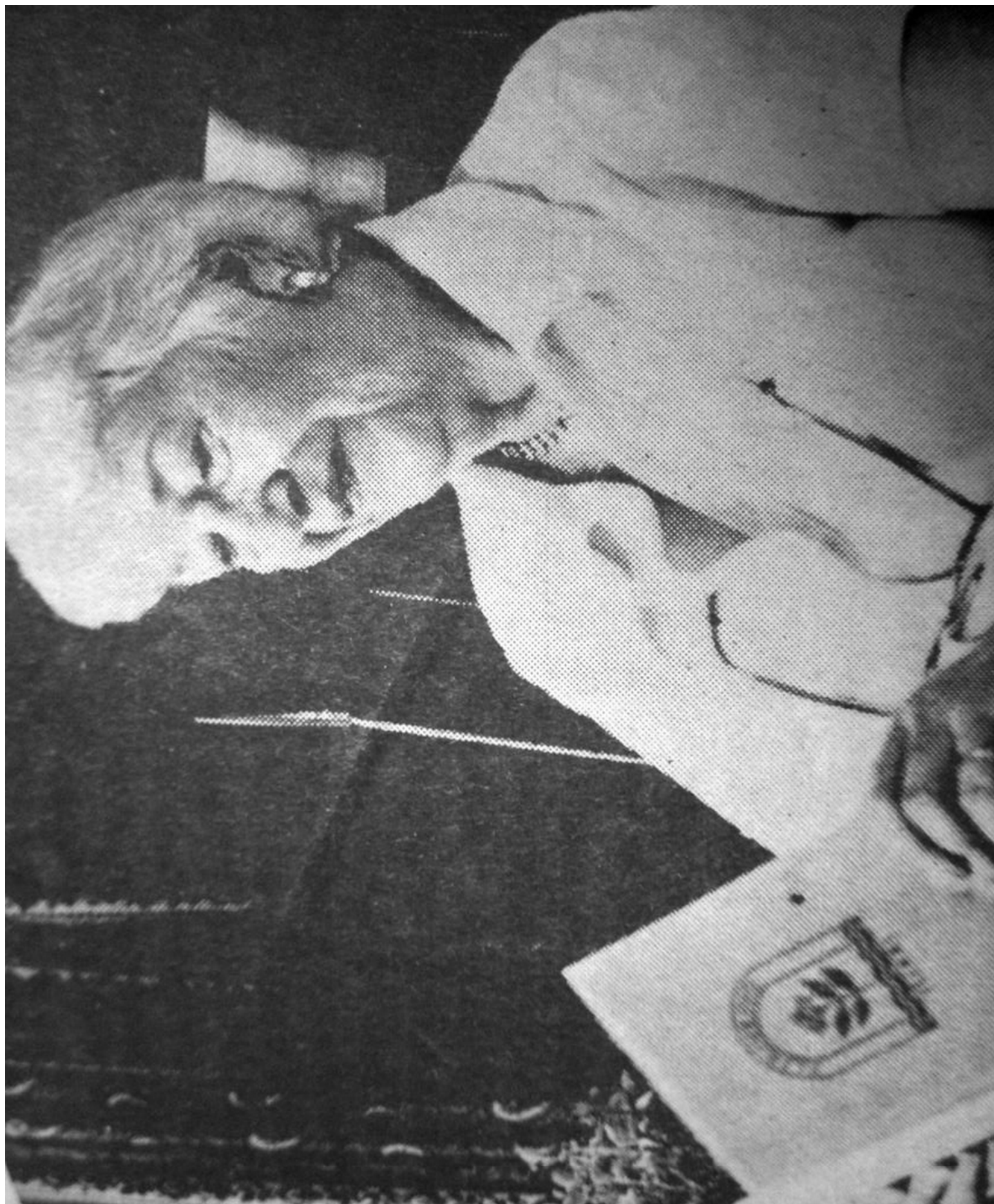
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Dr. Ruel E. Foster, chairman of the WVU Department of English, thinks one of Miss McNeill's greatest virtues is her complete lack of affectation.

"You'll find none of the big, dramatic rhetoric of Shakespeare or Milton in her poetry," Dr. Foster said. "She's contemporary, yet you'll find none of the tortured rhetoric that many modern poets fall prey to."

"She is part of a great tradition in American poetry," he observed.



Honored 6-13-85

Louise McNeill Pease, of Lewisburg, was honored by West Virginia Writers, Inc., by being named this year's recipient of the organization's JUG Award. The award was presented at the WVW Annual Conference, held this past weekend at Cedar Lakes. Accepting the award on behalf of Mrs. Pease, who was unable to attend, was her sister, Mrs. Elizabeth Dorsey, of Morgantown. The award was made at the banquet on Saturday night.

The JUG award was created by West Virginia Writers, Inc., to recognize excellence in the field of writing by a West Virginian. Mrs. Pease is the third person to receive the JUG award and the first poet honored. Alberta Pierson Hannum received the first JUG in 1983 and Jim Comstock, country editor of Richwood, the second in 1984.

In private life Mrs. Roger Waterman Pease, Louise was born and reared on a mountain farm in Pocahontas near Marlinton, attending a two-room school her father taught.

She received her Bachelor's degree in English from Concord College and her Master's degree from Miami University of Ohio. She later received a doctorate in history from West Virginia University.

"Paradox Hill: From Appalachia to Lunar Shore," was published by the West Virginia University Foundation, Inc.

She writes in traditional verse form. She believes, however, that the beauty of poetry lies in content and feeling rather than in form. She believes poetry should be useful—useful to the spirit, useful to relieve the mind and useful to society.

Her poetry has appeared in such respected national literary magazines as Saturday Review and Atlantic Monthly. During the 1950's, she was a frequent contributor to the Saturday Evening Post, Ladies Home Journal, Good Housekeeping, Harpers and other magazines.

Her husband is a former instructor at West Virginia University. They have a son, Douglas, who is a graduate of the University of Connecticut.

Always interested in helping others to write better, she has been an instructor, in recent years, at the Summer Writers Conference at Marietta, Ohio.

As Stephen Vincent Benet said in the Foreword to "Gauley Mountain: 'There is a new voice in the land.'

INDIAN PIPES

From pebbled banks they climbed with
shoulders low
And brought these river stones to lay
upon
Their chieftain, fallen in the stealth of

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She received her Bachelor's degree in English from Concord College and her Master's degree from Miami University of Ohio. She later received a doctorate in history from West Virginia University.

Her most famous work is "Gauley Mountain," which was her first collection of poems, published in 1939 with a foreword written by Stephen Vincent Benet. "Gauley Mountain," a series of historical poems tracing the lives of various West Virginia families, is heavily slanted toward pioneer life, as are many of her poems.

"Time Is Our House," her second volume of poetry, was published in 1942. It contains philosophical poems and a section of lyrics on World War II. The collection was printed as a prize book by the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference.

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INDIAN PIPES

From pebbled banks they climbed with
shoulders low
And brought these river stones to lay
upon
Their chieftain, fallen in the stealth of
dawn
By flinted arrow from a Shawnee bow.

Spring moons have come and hunting
moons have gone,
Sheep nipped the grass and rabbits
scratched the snow
Across this grave,—the pale-face
tracked the doe,
And bench-legged cars pursued the
mottled fawn.

But still in dusky summer when the
loon
Cries from the shallows of approaching
night,
Between the stones they heaped above
his mound,
Beaneath the eerie pallor of the moon,
Bloom ghostly flowers—pipes of waxen
white
For one who seeks the Happy Hunting
Ground.

—Louise McNeill Pease
from Gauley Mountain

DROOP 8-26-28

Hills, blue and silent
Behind this old battleground;
Hills that once rang with cries of
dying men,
And with the gun's resound.

Once on this cool mountain slope,
Where grasses green, and trees now
wave,
Brothers were enemies, friends were
foes,
Who now sleep here in one great,
silent grave.

Dusk—fading o'er the battle field.
Shadows lengthening o'er the hill-
tops, night—
Sleep on, oh gallant men, both blue
and gray,
You gave your all for what you
thought was right.

Louise McNeill, 17 years of age

Miss Louise McNeill of Marlinton, is a young poet who is beginning to get recognition and have her verses published in various magazines. I have before me the 1931 autumn number of "Star-Dust", a journal of poetry, published at Washington, D. C. In it is the announcement that the monthly book prize offered by a distinguished western poet for best poems sent into the Stardust Club each month was awarded to Miss McNeill for the month of April. Under the caption "Fragment:"

I have grown strong with the
strength of my desolate mountains,
Amored from bitterness, pulseless to
touch or to sound.

There is reality only in the wind, the
jagged iciness of frozen ground

In "The Poets Forum" for September, published at Howe, Oklahoma, Miss McNeill has three poems. Here is one of them, "Request":

Tell him, all who love me,
After I have gone
To walk alone

The dusty road to death

...all who love me,
After I have gone
To walk alone
The dusty road to death,
That I was not afraid because I held
His name upon my lips, with failing
breath.

—
The "Kaleidoscope," a national
magazine of poetry for August, pub-
lished at Dallas, Texas, says Miss
Louise McNeill of Marlinton, at the
age of twenty years, makes her debut
as a poet. Her poem, "Unless You
Knew:"

"You, lying there so calm and
strangely still,
No protest on your lips, no
word of grief,
Strike a swift still wonder to the
soul of mine
Who never knew belief.
It is incredible that you should
close
Your eyes to all quick beauty,
Stay your breath,
You who loved all life, laughter and
tears,
As tho' you welcome death!

It is incredible that you should take,
Peace for sharp ecstasy, silence for
life's song . . .
Without a struggle or a farewell cry,
Unless you knew that it was not for
long.

10-15-31

Tribute To Louise McNeill
Pease, West Virginia Poet
Laureate

7-8-93
by Rep. Nick Joe Rahall, D-WV

Louise McNeill Pease, West Virginia poet laureate, passed away at the age of 82. Ms. Pease, a native of Pocahontas County was sixteen when she first started writing poetry and dedicated most of her writing to the coal miners and the people of Appalachia. Her talent and her commitment to West Virginia state issues led then-Governor Jay Rockefeller, in 1971, to declare Pease West Virginia poet laureate, a title she kept till her death.

Early in her career, she sold poems to The Saturday Evening Post, for \$5 a line. In 1931, she published her first collection of poems, "Mountain White." Since then, she has published six other books. Her last book, "Hill Daughter: New and Selected Poems," was published in 1991.

Ms. Pease graduated from Concord College in Athens, WV and afterward, taught History and English. She received a master's degree from Miami University in Ohio and earned a doctorate from West Virginia University in Morgantown. She started teaching in a one-room schoolhouse and later became a professor at Potomac State College and Fairmont State College, before ending her thirty year career in teaching. While she was teaching, Ms. Pease also concentrated on writing fiction and poems for magazines.

Ms. Pease has been called "a true daughter of the Mountain State." Her poems about coal miners are regarded by many as a way to study and learn about West Virginia history. Ms. Pease's intellect and spiritual beliefs also can be detected through her words; in 1991, she stated, "I suppose all my books are touched by the earth, the feeling that I'm going to be bound to the earth. I may go on a long journey, but I will be back to the earth."

West Virginia has lost a truly admirable and talented woman who articulated the joys and challenges of Appalachian with such emotion that anyone who reads her poems will experience the passions of Appalachia's people. Louise McNeill Pease will be greatly missed.

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